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Round One WYCOMBE v NEWPORT  
— A four page supplementNow soccer is more  
popular than  
Rugby Union!

NEWPORT, with a population of 110,000, was a world famous stronghold of Rugby Union when a handful of Soccer enthusiasts gambled on forming Newport County A.F.C. in 1912. Nobody ever thought, in those distant days, that Soccer would one day become a serious rival to the glamorous rugby club. But in fact, Soccer is now the bigger attraction.

Founding the Soccer club appears to have been quite a casual affair. An informal gathering in a local pub agreed that it might be a good thing for the game if the County of Monmouthshire could have a team (hence the name Newport County). Almost at once, although there were no players and no ground, they acquired membership of the Second Division of the Southern League.

They were due to start operations just a few weeks later. Somerset Park, the club's home, was rented, dressing rooms (plus a wooden hut for

the Press) were organised, and the newly-appointed player-manager scraped a team together with only days to spare.

Times were hard and that first season was one of the worst on record. Often the chairman had to go around the town on a Friday night collecting enough money for the next day's travelling — and in even bigger scramble for the Monday pay-day. The club lost £700 in their first season.

But they staggered from one crisis to another until the shut-down for World War I and

when, in season 1920-21, the Southern League became Division 3 of the Football League. Newport were duly elected.

Since then, the word most often used to describe Newport County's career has been "chequered". Often the club has been on the verge of bankruptcy and faced with the prospect of almost as frequently they have been forced to seek re-election.

Once, in season 1930-31, they failed to get it, although by the summer of 1932 they were back

in, largely because London club Thames Athletic dropped out.

The biggest change in the club's fortunes came in 1937 with the appointment of an unknown Irishman, Billy McCandless, as manager. Within a decade he was to pilot all three South Wales teams, Newport, Cardiff and Swansea, to promotion.

Not only was Newport attendance record of 2,368 achieved in October of that year (for the match with neighbours Cardiff) but the following season, 1938-39, became the greatest in the

club's history. They reached the top of the Third Division on October 8 and stayed there for the rest of the season.

They played only three matches in the Second Division, beating Southampton 3-1, drawing 1-1 with Spurs, and losing 2-1 to Nottingham Forest. The latter being only hours before World War II erupted.

By the end of it the club was virtually moribund. Somerset Park was derelict — and the manager had to beg clothing companies to provide kit for the largely unfitted players he had gathered around him.

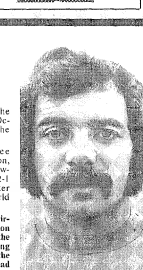
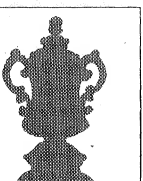
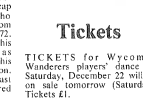
Small wonder that they were relegated at the end of their first and only season in the Second Division. One of their defeats, the biggest-ever, was by 13-0 at Newcastle.

Newport's best F.A. Cup display came in 1948-49 when they beat Brighton, Leytonstone, Leeds and Huddersfield before visiting Portsmouth, then top of Division I, in Round 5. County were knocked out 2-1.

Billy Lucas, who has been Newport's manager off and on for 20 years, made his debut as player-manager for the club in December 1953 after winning several Welsh cups with Swindon and Swansea. He was having one of his spells outside the game when Newport were relegated to Division 4 at the end of season 1961-62.

That's where they have been ever since, despite three successive applications for re-election between 1968-71.

Last season they celebrated their Diamond Jubilee as a League club. And they missed promotion by a fraction of a goal. Aldershot taking fourth place by a goal average advantage of 12.

WILLIE BROWN  
... top scorerHAROLD JARMANN  
... wingerROD JONES  
... centre forwardWILLIE SCREEN  
... defender

## DISAPPOINTING START

AFTER last season's long promotion cliffhanger when Newport missed the Division III boat by a fraction of a goal, County made a disappointingly muted start to this campaign.

So until their sixth league game did they register their first win — a 4-2 home success against Crewe which lifted the club out of the Division IV basement.

Top writer Willie Brown, who last season notched 16 league goals, failed to get on the score sheet until the eighth game against Stockport. And by that time manager Billy Lucas had long since discarded his 2-2-4 experiment of all out attack. This policy proved something of a failure as Newport were just not establishing any sort of controlled authority in midfield.

As a result, Newport's problems this season have centred around an irritating inconsistency and a lack of scoring power and finish. And the absence of Welsh under-23 cap Jeff Thomas hasn't helped.

The talented Thomas was stretched off with a knee injury at Reading in September 1972. He has taken the advice of a specialist and has given up his career because of an arthritic knee condition — a big blow to the club.

Linkman Brian Godfrey, who has skipped the side recently in place of veteran Brian Harris (with whom he once played at Everton), has hit improved form lately and Newport recently beat Hartlepool to get their first away win of the season.

This success, together with Somerset Park victories over Rotherham (1-0), Walsfield (1-0) and Northampton (1-1) must rank as County highlights so far this season.

Club officials remain quietly optimistic about the team's future prospects and chances of presenting a real coup before the season is very much older. They are banking on a good cup run to boost the confidence of the side for the future.

## Meet the Newport team

HERE'S a run-down on the Newport County players who will be turning out against Wycombe Wanderers at Loukes Park tomorrow (Saturday).

County are skippered by the familiar Brian Godfrey, who leads the side from midfield. He is a senior Welsh international with three caps and has given good service to Everton, Southport, Preston, Aston Villa and Bristol Rovers. Newport paid a record fee of £10,000 for his services.

**DEFENCE**  
**JOHN MACEY** (goalkeeper): Bristol-born; previous experience with Bristol City, Shrewsbury and Grimsby, from whom he was signed, on a free transfer in 1970. Settled down at once with Newport and played in every League match last season. Missed a few through injury this season but is perfectly fit again.

**GRAHAM COLDRICK** (right back): Local product, joined Cardiff City at 16 and played 117 League, Cup and Cup-winners' matches for them before joining his home-town club in 1969 for a £4,000 fee. Capped at Welsh under-23 level, and was Newport's captain until injury restricted his appearances to only 17 games last season.

**PETER PASSEY** (centre back): Twenty year old from Birmingham who won an England Youth cap. Joined County on loan from Birmingham in January 1972 and produced enough potential to be taken on the staff by last Christmas. Has struck up a most harmonious partnership with Aizlewood in the middle of Newport's back four.

**STEVE AIZLEWOOD** (centre back): Just 21 but already the club's star defender. Was a 16 year old schoolboy when he made his League debut for Newport.

**MARTYN SPAGGUE** (left back): A 24 year old part-timer and local seedworker who made his debut in the Welsh under-23 international when he gave up competitive football because it took too much of his time. Is back again now because "I missed it much more than I thought I would."

**MIDFIELD**  
**BOB SUMMERHAYES** (twenty-two year old from Cardiff City) who he joined straight from school after winning three Welsh schoolboy caps. Turned down a chance to join Fulham when Cardiff released him, and made his mark at Newport in 37 League matches last season. Hard-grafting, premier who never stops running.

**LEN LILLY**: Locally-born, all-round sportsman who plays with equal skill at midfield or in front. 34 years old, 114 times in his 304 matches for Bristol Rovers who revealed his loyalty with free transfer at the end of last season. Then he crossed the Severn Bridge to join Newport.

**WILLIE BROWN** (striker): 25 year old Scot born at Falkirk. Rejoined by Newport as their best-ever bargain. Joined Burnley in 1965 and Cardiff in 1967 for £2,070.

**HAROLD JARMANN** (winger): Twenty-three year old who operates dangerously along both flanks. Scored 114 times in his 304 matches for Bristol Rovers who revealed his loyalty with free transfer at the end of last season. Then he crossed the Severn Bridge to join Newport.

**WILLIE SCREEN** (substitute): A Welsh under-23 cap and tireless utility player who was a surprise free transfer from Swindon in the summer of 1972. Manager Lucas, who realised his Swansea boss, stepped up this 24 year old without hesitation. Screen played 40 times last season, but has been injured recently.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24th

F.A. Cup 1st round proper

WYCOMBE WANDERERS

v.

NEWPORT COUNTY

Loukes Park Kick-off 2.15 p.m.

Adults 30p. Children 20p. O.A.P.'s 10p. Enclosure 15p.

Gates open 12.15 p.m.

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